# Telehealth Provides Crucial Opportunity to Expand Support for Transgender Youth in 200 Words

Population Health Sciences

**Date Posted:**

Apr 19, 2022

As some state lawmakers across the U.S. attempt to ban gender-affirming care for transgender youth, or go even further and deem this care as child abuse, Children's Hospital of Philadelphia's Gender and Sexuality Development Program (CHOP's GSDP) continues to see record high numbers of new patients—trans and non-binary youth who seek the evidence-based, medically necessary care we provide both in-person and through telemedicine.

In a new special issue of *Transgender Health*, we explore the opportunities and challenges of telehealth for delivering gender-affirming care and describe outcomes from a variety of clinical settings. While some policymakers seek to limit access to gender-affirming care, standing on this research evidence and our experience working with patients, we would urge policies that instead increase timely and equitable access to quality, lifesaving gender-affirming care, including the use of telehealth to deliver this care.

At CHOP's GSDP, we have certainly witnessed the challenges in delivering and disparities in accessing care via telehealth. But we have also had many successes, not just for typical medical and mental health visits, but also for the other essential services and supports we provide. Telehealth has allowed us to make earlier linkages to care for youth living in shelters, and has more than doubled the number of youth and family members attending support groups. We're also able to include youth and caregivers in virtual trainings for youth-serving professionals, enhancing their understanding and better equipping them to engage with trans youth.

Telehealth is no substitute for in-person connections, but we look forward to the ways in which it can expand access and increase efficiency to get transgender and non-binary youth support and services when and where they need it most.

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*This post is part of our "____ in 200 Words" series. In this series, we tackle issues related to children's health policy and explain and connect you to resources to help understand them further, all in 200 words. If you have any suggestions for a topic in this series, please send a note to PolicyLab's Strategic Operations & Communications Director Lauren Walens.*

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